UNITED
NATIONS

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General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/49/411
20 September 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-ninth session
Item 104 of the provisional agenda*

NECESSITY OF ADOPTING EFFECTIVE MEASURES FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD WHO ARE VICTIMS OF ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES, INCLUDING ARMED CONFLICTS

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The present note has been prepared pursuant to paragraphs 3 to 5 of General Assembly resolution 48/157 of 20 December 1993, entitled "Protection of children affected by armed conflicts". In that resolution, the Assembly expressed its grave concern about the tragic situation of children in many parts of the world as a result of armed conflicts; urged all Member States to continue seeking comprehensive improvement of the situation with appropriate and concrete measures (para. 3); requested bodies and organizations of the United Nations, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, within the scope of their respective mandates, to cooperate in order to ensure more effective action in addressing the problem of children affected by armed conflicts (para. 4); and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its forty-ninth session a report on those concrete measures, which had been taken to alleviate the situation of children in armed conflict (para. 5).

2. In paragraph 13 of its resolution 1994/91 of 9 March 1994, entitled "Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child", the Commission on Human Rights decided to establish an open-ended inter-sessional working group of the Commission to elaborate, as a matter of priority, a draft optional protocol to the Convention, using as one basis for its discussions the preliminary draft optional protocol on involvement of children in armed conflicts submitted by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/91). In paragraph 16 of the resolution, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to invite Governments, intergovernmental

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organizations, the Committee on the Rights of the Child and the expert on the situation of children in armed conflicts, to be appointed by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 48/157, as well as non-governmental organizations, to send comments on the preliminary draft optional protocol, for consideration by the working group.

3. Pursuant to the above resolutions, the Secretary-General, on 7 June 1994, addressed requests to Governments, specialized agencies, United Nations bodies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations for appropriate information and comments.

4. As at 31 August 1994, the Secretary-General had not received any information relating exclusively to paragraphs 3 and 4 of resolution 48/157.

5. Comments received by the Secretary-General on the preliminary draft optional protocol on involvement of children in armed conflicts will be issued as a document of the inter-sessional working group of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/WG.13/2 and addenda) and circulated to Governments in advance of the meeting, which will be held at the United Nations Office at Geneva from 31 October to 11 November 1994.